

REMARKS

On a BOOK lately published,

ENTITLED,

*A Plain Account of the Nature and
End of the SACRAMENT of the
LORD'S SUPPER.*

In a LETTER to the AUTHOR.

The SECOND EDITION.

To which is added,

A Preface, further explaining the View
of the Author in publishing the *Remarks*.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near the Oxford-
Arms in Warwick-Lane. MDCCXXXV.

Price One Shilling.

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GRAMM





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P R E F A C E T O T H E S E G O N D E D I T I O N.

THE Design of this little Piece not having been so perfectly understood by some as I could wish, I shall briefly lay before the Reader my Intention in the principal Things I have here remark'd, and then give him my Reasons why I think a larger and more elaborate Work upon this Subject was needless, or at least, as Matters stand at present, impracticable.

Altho' the Author of A plain Account of the Nature and End of the Sacrament has in a great Part of his Book contended that habitual Sinners, nay, that the scandalously and notoriously immoral in the habitual and open Conduct of their Lives, if profess'd Christians, may be worthy Partakers of the holy Supper; and if they sincerely believe in Christ, * and receive according to the Form prescrib'd in the Church of England, it is next to impossible they should eat and drink unworthily, so that they hear the Words pronounc'd by the Minister at the delivering of the Elements,

A 2

and

* See Rem. p. 7, 8. of this Edit.

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and come with Seriousness; yet has he, as I have fully shewn, dropt here and there some Expressions which make it absolutely necessary to a Person's worthy receiving, that he come with a Disposition towards Amendment, and a Resolution to amend; nay further, that he come with an honest Resolution of doing the Will of God for the future; i. e. as I take it, he must for some time have left off the Practice of his Sins, that he may have a justifiable Reason to conclude that his Repentance is real, and his Purposes of Amendment sincere. My Intention in this Part is a Call upon the Author to tell us which of these three Things is his Meaning: Whether that all who sincerely believe Jesus Christ to be their King and Judge, be their Lives never so contrary to their Faith, never so wicked and abominable, ought to come to the holy Communion, so they come with a serious Remembrance of Christ? Or whether they ought to stay away, unless they come with a Resolution to amend for the future? Or whether they ought not to come till they have good reason to believe that they have brought themselves to an honest Resolution of doing the Will of Christ? If he wrote his Book with a Design it should be understood, it is but a modest Request to ask his Meaning, nor can he be angry with his Readers for expecting and demanding it; the less so, because he says, p. 2. "I shall endeavour to lay down what I have to say in so plain and

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" intelligible a manner, that every Christian
" capable of thinking at all upon this Subject,
" may be able immediately to see whether it
" conveys to him the true Notions of this
" Duty left us by Christ and his Apostles or
" not." If the last of the three Things men-
tion'd should be his Meaning, I think he can-
not do less, in Justice to himself, than give a
reasonable Account why he has wrote his
Book in such a manner, that very many, I
may say most of his Readers whom I have con-
vers'd with, take the first to be his Meaning.
If the second be his Meaning, that a vicious
Liver's coming with a bare Resolution to a-
mend is sufficient, I think it ought to be sup-
ported with good Arguments; and as to the
first, it is so horridly impious, that I would
have no one whatever impute it to him.

There is exactly the same Uncertainty as to
the Author's Meaning concerning the Self-
Examination previously necessary to a Person's
Receiving; and my Intention in what I have
said upon this Subject, is to draw forth a full
Explanation, whether sincere Believers, who
are very wicked in the habitual Conduct of
their Lives, have need of any previous Self-
Examination at all when they Receive accord-
ing to the Usage of the Church of England,
so as they resolve to attend to what the Mi-
nister says in delivering the Elements, and
to behave with Seriousness; or whether they
ought so far to enquire into their present
Temper,

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Temper, as fully to satisfy themselves that they come with a Resolution to amend their Lives; or whether they ought not to proceed yet further, and so far look into their past Conduct, as to be able to judge upon reasonable Grounds that they come with an HONEST Resolution to yield universal Obedience to Christ's Will for the future. I am very sorry he has given the least occasion to any to represent the first of these as his Meaning; but it is too obvious that he has; for p. 103. he says, "After having thus shewn from express Words of the New Testament what is necessary towards a due Performance of this religious Duty, and consequently what is not so, we may the better proceed to some other Observations upon the same Subject." Have we not his own Word for it here, say they who impute this Opinion to him, that he has already shewn all that is necessary towards a due Performance of this Duty? But not one word is there in the whole foregoing Discourse of the Necessity of a Sinner's taking up a Resolution to amend before he come to this Ordinance, much less of the Necessity of bringing himself to an honest Resolution of doing the Will of Christ for the future. But in answer to this, I urge, that about 40 Pages after, when he is treating of the Benefits of Receiving, he has this Expression: "A Disposition towards Amendment, a Resolution to amend, are virtually imply'd in our

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" our professing ourselves Christians, and re-
" membring Christ as our Lord and Master
" at his Table." This fully convinces me that
the first cannot be his Meaning, because he had
before sufficiently declar'd that Persons by
receiving this Ordinance publickly acknowledge
Christ to be their Master, and themselves to
be his Disciples. About 20 Pages after this
he asserts further, that our Receiving " im-
plies in it an honest Resolution of doing the
" Will of God," which I think as fully proves
that the third, and the third only, can be his
Meaning. To believe this, they say, requires
the highest degree of Credulity. For if this
were his Meaning, to what purpose are those
labour'd Sentences wherein he has laid it down
in so plain and intelligible a manner, that
every Christian capable of thinking at all
upon this Subject, may be able immediate-
ly to see that habitual Sinners, and the sca-
dalously and notoriously immoral in the habi-
tual and open Conduct of their Lives, may, ac-
cording to him, receive the holy Supper in a
worthy manner ? To what purpose those
Pages spent to encourage habitual Sinners to
come to this Sacrament ?

Another very necessary thing that his Rea-
ders should be acquainted with, and which for
that reason I have desired him to explain, is,
how far the Promise of Christ's being in the
midst of us, relates to us Christians of later
Ages? and whether such who partake of the
holy

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holy Communion in a worthy manner, have any justifiable reason to expect the Assistance of God's Spirit in the Performance of that Duty? And the Reader will find in the Margin the Places referr'd to, which contain the Grounds I have for asking an Explanation on these important Heads.*

In what is said concerning the Communion's being the renewing of our Covenant, and a Seal, I have fully shewn how little reason he had to depart from the common ways of speaking, and how inconsistent he is with himself in so doing.†

It is with regard to these things chiefly that I lay down that Conclusion near the beginning, the softest and best thing I can say of far the greatest Part of your Book is, that the writing it was entirely needless. For if he interprets himself so, as to agree with the generality of our best Writers upon the foregoing Heads, to what purpose are so many Pages multiply'd upon things that have been said before by others in a much fuller, easier, and more intelligible manner?

In the Second Part of this little Piece I have laid before him the Reasons which prevail with me to believe that he has given up several principal Articles of our most holy Faith; to the end that either he may shew he has not departed from the common Faith in any

* Rem. p. 24, 25. & 35—41.

† Rem. p. 27, &c.

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any of those Topicks, or may fairly state and support his peculiar Tenets.

Many Persons I perceive expect some larger and more elaborate Performance in answer to this plain Account of the Sacrament; but from what has been already said, I think it must sufficiently appear that such an Answer is as yet needless, or at least impracticable; for till the Author shall be pleas'd to ascertain his Meaning, to what purpose is it to multiply Arguments? Should any one of those Meanings which appear exceptionable be fix'd upon and laboriously confuted, and he should afterwards deny it to have been his, he may justly tell us that we have dress'd up a Puppet of our own and then fought against it. In like manner, as to those Articles of Faith which he seems to have dropt, should he again resume them, and publish to the World that his Intention was mistaken, that he is a real Believer in those Articles, having often subscrib'd to the Truth of them, how must an Adversary look that had spent much Time and Pains in battering and overthrowing his supposed Errors? Had he indeed openly avow'd the Opinions which from this Book he has given us but too much ground to suspect he entertains, and endeavour'd to support them with new Arguments, or old Arguments put in a new Light, Reason would that he should in all those Points have been particularly and distinctly answer'd; but since the Truth of the

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Case is, that he has only bid farewell to several of the most important Doctrines of Christianity, without vouchsafing to inform us of the Reasons that have induc'd him to this, I see not what further can be done, than to call upon him to lay those Reasons before the World. Besides, there have been so many excellent Books wrote in Defence of the several Articles he has dropt, that it is my Opinion little or nothing can be added to what has been already said. And that the unlearned Reader might not be wholly at a loss, I have quoted various Passages from the late Dr. Clarke, wherein some of those Doctrines are not only fully asserted, but also supported by weighty Arguments both from Reason and Scripture.

I shall only add, that should any one pretend to ascertain this Author's Meaning but himself, there may be an eternal disputing whether it is his Meaning or not, without ever entring into the Merits of the Cause.

A L E T.



A LETTER to the Author of a Book, Entituled, *A Plain Ac- count of the Nature and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*

S I R,

S you have not thought fit that your Name should be prefix'd to your Work, you will pardon me that I treat you not with that Distinction which your Character and Station in the World may possibly demand. Universal Fame, it's true, ascribes it to a P—te of great Rank in our C—; but certainly it would be the highest Presumption in me to impute that to his L—p in Print, which he has not been pleas'd to own in the same publick Manner. Besides, as Fame is often found a Liar, it would be a Pleasure to me to find it is so in the present Case. For I can by no means bring myself to think that this is a Work equal to the Person to whom it is given by the Publick. And indeed, his sacred

and exalted Function forbids me to go into this Opinion, till it be proved by some Argument less deceitful, and which cannot be withstood. For, according to the best Judgment I am able to make, it ought to have come from any other Hand, rather than that of a B——p of the C—— of E——

To guard against Superstition, Sir, is your professed Aim^a; but, if I am not mistaken, you have struck at the very Vitals of our Holy Religion. And if I have any Knowledge of the World, the Unbelievers, against whose chief Attempts you may possibly have design'd (and in Charity I am bound to believe that you did design) that your Book should be a good Preservative, are the Persons who find their Account in it, and rejoice the most to see it published. The softest and best Thing I can say of far the greatest Part of it, is, that the writing it was entirely needless; and I heartily wish that your printing it may not be found to lessen that small Degree of Piety which is yet left amongst us.

I shall first consider the main Subject of your Book, and then lay before you the Reasons which induce me to think that you have given up several of the principal Articles of our Religion.

The more I consider the Subject, and your Manner of treating it, the more fully am I persuaded that you might very well have spared yourself this Pains. You spend many Pages to fix St. Paul's precise Sense of *unworthy Receiving*, and of his Direction to the *Corinthians* to examine themselves. You say "The End for which our " Lord instituted this Duty, was the Remem—" brance of himself, p. 24. Whoever there—" fore

^a Pref. p. 8.

" fore in a serious and religious Sense of his Re-
 " lation to Christ, as his Disciple, performs
 " these Actions of eating Bread and drinking
 " Wine in Remembrance of Christ, as of a Per-
 " son corporally absent from his Disciples, *most*
 " *certainly* performs them agreeably to the End
 " of the Institution declared by Christ himself
 " and his immediate Disciples, p. 29. The
 " Examination mentioned by St. Paul, as re-
 " garding the Lord's Supper, is, strictly speak-
 " ing, a Christian's Examination of his own
 " Heart and Disposition, *by the Institution* of this
 " holy Rite, in order to *assure himself* that he
 " comes to the Lord's Supper, and will behave
 " himself at it, *not as at a common Meal*, or an
 " ordinary Eating and Drinking, but as a par-
 " ticular Rite appointed by Christ; *viz.* that he
 " comes to it, in order to eat this Bread and
 " drink this Wine in a *serious and religious Re-*
 " *membrance of him and his Death*, p. 71. It is
 " evident that the whole Affair of eating and
 " drinking *unworthily*, in St. Paul's Sense, is
 " confined to the Frame of our Minds, and our
 " Behaviour *at the very Time* of our Perform-
 " ance of this religious Duty. Had not some
 " among the *Corinthians* been guilty of great
 " and criminal Indecencies, *at the very Time* of
 " the Celebration, we had not heard of the
 " Crime and Danger of eating and drinking
 " unworthily. And now we do read of it in
 " St. Paul, we see it plainly to be their eating
 " this Bread and drinking this Cup with a Be-
 " haviour and Dispositions utterly unsuitable to
 " the End of the Institution; *which was the se-*
 " *rious and religious Remembrance of Christ*; and
 " in such a manner as plainly shewed that the
 " Bread and Wine ordained for the Remem-
 " brance,

" brance of our Lord's Body and Blood in this
 " Rite, were not thought of by them so as to
 " be *discerned* (or *differenced* as the Word fig-
 " nifies) from *Bread* and *Wine* taken at a *com-*
 " *mon Meal*, p. 76, 77. A professed Christian;
 " though very blameable in some Parts of the
 " Conduct of his Life, yet coming to the
 " Lord's Table with a serious Frame of Mind,
 " and on purpose to *remember Christ* as his Lord
 " and Master, in the Way appointed by him-
 " self; and actually partaking of the Lord's
 " Supper, with that religious Remembrance
 " which is suitable to it: Such a one, I say,
 " cannot justly be said to do this particular A-
 " ction in an improper Way, or to eat this
 " Bread and drink this Wine *unworthily*, that is,
 " unsuitably to the Design of the Institution;
 " though he may, in other Respects, have be-
 " haved himself *unworthily* or *unsuitably* to so
 " holy a Religion, p. 81, 82. No Christian
 " who eats and drinks at the Lord's Supper
 " with a *sincere and serious Remembrance of Christ*,
 " as his Lord and Master, can be said to eat
 " and drink *unworthily*, in St. Paul's Sense;
 " or unsuitably to the End of this Rite. Nor
 " can he be said to eat or drink his own *Condem-
 " nation*; because he does truly *discern* the
 " Lord's Body by *remembering it in the most seri-
 " ous Manner*. He has therefore performed this
 " one Duty in a proper Manner. But if he be
 " still a *wilful habitual Sinner* in any one Instance,
 " he will most certainly be condemned: Not
 " for receiving the Sacrament *unworthily*;
 " (which he does not appear to have done) but
 " for the Disobedience of his Life in those Points
 " which are indispensably necessary to Salvati-
 " on, p. 87, 88." And the whole Tendency
 " of

of your Arguments for four Pages together preceding this, is to encourage habitual Sinners to come to the Sacrament. In the next Pages you proceed to tell us, that “*professed Christians who were scandalously and notoriously immoral in the habitual and open Conduct of their Lives, and continued to bring a publick Disgrace upon their holy Religion,* do not appear to have been excluded the Communion in the first Ages, from any Thing peculiar to *the Lord's Supper*; nor from any Opinion that such Persons could not possibly come to it with good Dispositions, and eat and drink in such a manner as not to fall under St. Paul's Denunciations.” So that even these Persons also, *vile* as they are represented, might eat and drink *worthily* in St. Paul's Sense of the Words. You say also, p. 91. “That in our Church, the Minister *distinctly* calling upon every Person to eat the Bread in Remembrance of Christ's Body broken and deprived of Life; and to drink the Wine in Remembrance of Christ's Blood shed, guards this Rite almost against the Possibility of any serious Christian's eating or drinking *unworthily* or unsuitably to the End of it.” But why this is so particularly confin'd by you as it is, p. 92. to *serious Christians who sincerely believe in Christ as their Master and Judge*, I cannot see; unless you suppose that the habitually Wicked may be *serious Christians*. For the Reason you give most certainly holds good, with respect also to the *habitual Sinner, nay, the scandalously and notoriously immoral*, upon the same two Conditions which are here set down by you, that is, in case they bear the Words (pronounced by the Minister at his delivering the Elements) and come with *Seriousness*, which is a Thing you have already supposed.

posed these Persons may do. And the plain
 Truth is, you have fully declar'd that the habi-
 tually Wicked may be those serious Christians,
 who sincerely believe in Christ as their Master and
 Judge, pag. 84 and 85. " A Person who is a
 " sincere Believer, and partakes of the Commu-
 " nion in Remembrance of Christ as his *Master*
 " — if he still goes on in his Sin; the *habitual*
 " *Wickedness* of his Life, and his own wilful
 " Neglect to reform and amend it, is the most
 " certain and unavoidable Condemnation pro-
 " noun'd against him by that very Saviour
 " whom he commemorates in this Rite." And
 again a little after: " There are, we may sup-
 " pose, Persons inwardly convinced of the Truth
 " of the Christian Religion, and therefore *real*
 " *Believers* in Jesus Christ as sent into the World
 " by God; who yet do not in the Course of their
 " Lives regulate their Practice by his Precepts;
 " In this their Faith, or yielding their Assent to
 " the convincing Evidences of Christ's Mission,
 " they act a good Part, and a Part acceptable
 " to God. But by the *habitual Disobedience* of
 " their Lives, they forfeit all Title to his Fa-
 " vour, and will be condemned at the last Day."

The whole Drift of this, as I take it, is defeated
 by what you say, p. 80. " To explain this Matter
 a little farther, I do not confine the Guilt of
 eating and drinking unworthily to the strict
 Imitation of the *Corinthian Sinners*, in the one
 particular Instance of their Indecency; but
 think it ought to be extended to all Cases, to
 which the Apostle's Argument drawn from the In-
 stitution itself by parity of Reason can reach.
 Whatever Temper or Behaviour at the time
 of eating and drinking is utterly unsuitable to
 the Design of the Duty, must in its degree come
 under

"under the Censure of this Passage." Had you condescended, Sir, to have given us a few Instances of this Kind, you must, I think, have seen how little Necessity there was for a great Part of what you have here published.

Should a Person come to the holy Supper with this View only, that all his old Scores might be wiped out, and he might begin to sin upon a new Account, as it's possible some have done ; I make no doubt but you would determine that such a one received unworthily, notwithstanding *his sincere and serious Remembrance of Jesus Christ at the time of eating and drinking*. Should a Man who is not yet come to a fixed Resolution to part with all his Sins, and lead a Life universally holy, a Man who is sensible that there is one particular Sin which he cannot prevail with himself to abandon, partake of the holy Communion ; can such a one be said to receive worthily, although *at the time he sincerely and seriously remembers Jesus Christ*? Remember, Sir, that you have said, * "that the Performance of this Rite is the Profession of our Relation to Christ," and, || "is the publick acknowledging him to be our Master, and ourselves to be his Disciples ; and implies a Resolution to amend," p. 145. Does not this Person give himself the Lye, in professing himself the Servant and Disciple of Jesus Christ? Does he not at the same time know and feel, that he is the Servant of Sin? And can any one who makes a lying, dissembling, hypocritical Profession, of his being Christ's Disciple, be called a *worthy Receiver*? I believe you will not say it. I am sure, if you'll stick by your own Rule just now quoted, you cannot. I take it for granted that the Case you have put, p. 88. which I have be-

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fore mention'd, and which I shall again presently recite, was not design'd by you to come up to this. And that which confirms me herein, is, that you have expressly said, "A Disposition to-
 " wards Amendment, a Resolution to amend,
 " are virtually implied in our rememb'reng Christ
 " at his Table." * And again, "This Duty
 " implies in it an *honest* Resolution of doing his
 " Will." || Which Expressions of yours, by the way, in a great measure unsay what you have been asserting in the former Part of your Book; and give us to understand, that none of your *habitual Sinners*, none amongst the *scandalously and notoriously immoral*, who continue to bring a Disgrace upon their Profession, can partake of this Ordinance in a *worthy* Manner, unless they come with an *honest* Resolution to abandon their vicious Habits. How very many are hereby cut off? But why was this conceal'd so long from your Reader? Why was it not mention'd under the Head of *unworthy Receiving*? Why was it not fairly told to the *scandalously and notoriously immoral*, when you were speaking of them, or to the *habitual Sinners*, when you were encouraging them to come to the holy Communion? Why was it deferr'd for so many Pages, till you proceed to explain the Communion Service, speak of the *Benefits* of partaking, and against the Phrase *renewing the Covenant*?

Shou'd a Man be conscious to himself, that he has injur'd his Christian Brother, and is unwilling to make him the Restitution he is able; should any one bear a grudge against his Brother, from some real or supposed Offence, and altho' Forgiveness has been ask'd, or Restitution offer'd by the Party concern'd, he cannot find in his Heart

to

to be reconciled ; should a Person have receiv'd an Injury great or small, and feel his Heart dictating Revenge, and cannot bring himself to a Willingness freely to forgive the Wrong done him ; it's very evident from the foregoing Rule you have laid down, that if these Persons partake of the holy Communion they receive unworthily. *Their Temper at the Time of eating and drinking is utterly unsuitable to the Design of the Duty,* (which is, the professing and cultivating a hearty Friendship with all Christians, as being Members of the same Body) you immediately add, *and must in its Degree come under the Censure of this Passage, i. e. of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi.* I am afraid you have not here express'd yourself with the greatest Accuracy : *Utterly unsuitable* in my Mind does not admit of Degrees. If the Reason of St. Paul's Censure was, because the *Temper* of the *Corinthians*, *at the time* of their celebrating the holy Supper, was *utterly unsuitable* to the Design of the Duty, and the *Temper* of the Persons I have instanced in, or of any others that you yourself can give Instances of, be also *utterly unsuitable at the Time* of their partaking, surely they fall under the same Censure, the whole Censure in its utmost Degree.

The several Instances I have last mention'd must be also reckon'd with those who come to the holy Supper *without an honest Resolution to amend* ; which lessen, I am afraid, the Number of the *habitual Sinners*, the *scandalously and notoriously immoral*, that according to you are *worthy Receivers*, not a little : But of these, I think, you have made no particular Mention in your Work. You have indeed said, " That a Man ought to come with *Dispositions* suitable to the Design of this holy Rite," p. 75. and in another

ther Place, “ That if he wou’d come to good Purpose, he must come with such *Disposition*s of Mind as become Christians,” which you there tell us in the general are, “ a due Sense of our past Sins, a Resolution of behaving our selves as Christ’s Disciples, with a true Faith in him, as sent into the World by God,” p. 110. But might we not most reasonably have expected in a Book so large as this, a more particular Account, what the Dispositions becoming Christians are? And whether a Person who does not forsake his vicious Habits, may be said to entertain a *due* Sense of his past Sins, or to have those other *Disposition*s of Mind which become Christians? And if the *Disposition*s suitable to the Design of this holy Rite, do not include the *Disposition*s of Mind becoming Christians, as one wou’d think from the principal Drift of this Work you mean they do not, ought we not to have had a very particular and distinct Account of the former laid together in one Place, easy and obvious to every Reader?

But to proceed one Step further, and consider the Case you lay down, p. 87, 88. An habitual Sinner, although a professed Christian, eats and drinks at the Lord’s Supper with a sincere and serious Remembrance of Christ, as his Lord and Master, but continues still a wilful habitual Sinner after his receiving. I suppose you mean (for the Reasons I have before given) that this Person at the Time he receives has brought himself, as he thinks, to a firm Resolution to part with his vicious Habit, and imagines himself very sincere in professing himself the Disciple of Christ, and under all the Obligations of his Religion. Otherwise it falls in with the Case above-mentioned, and is point-blank against your own Rule. It might look

look perhaps like shewing too great an Inclina^tion to differ with you, should I determine absolutely against the Man who thus receives; but were I to give such a one my Advice, I am fully persuaded he would do much better to refrain from the Communion, 'till he had in some Measure broken his evil Habit, * and given himself proof of the Sincerity of his Resolution to part with it: And if you design *that* as a necessary indispensable Rule, that a Man must come with such *Dispositions* of Mind as become Christians, I think also that I have your Concurrence. But suppose this Man, continuing still in his sinful Habit, should go on Month after Month to receive the Sacrament, deluding himself every Time he partakes, with a fond Belief that his Resolution of quitting it is most sincere: † Will you pronounce this Man a worthy Receiver? You may say of him perhaps now as you did before that his Temper at the Time is not unsuitable to the End of this Rite: And that he is not guilty of the same Crime, for which the Corintbians are censur'd by St. Paul. What then? If he is guilty of a Crime full as great, ought he not to be warn'd of it, and desired either to correct his vicious Habit, or absent himself from the Communion, that he may not go on to provoke God, and aggravate his own Condemnation? You acknowledge, Sir, || that receiving the holy Supper,
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* Peccati habitus ante omnia exuendus est, antequam dignè quis Cænæ communicare possit. *Limborcb. Theol. Cbrisf. Lib. 5. Cap. 73.*

† *Crell. Etb. Cbrisf. Lib. 3. Cap. 10. p. 369.* At fine postea quidem ita se gesserint, ut illorum postulat professio, nihil obstat quo minus prorsus indigne accessisse censeantur, & ejus rei luant pœnas. *Slichting. in 1 Cor. xi. 28.* Quid vero si pollicitis non steterint & priora vitia continent? Indigne manducabant & bibent absq; dubio. ||. Pag. 188.

is “*the professing our selves obliged as truly as by an Oath to all the Practices becoming Christians.*” I add, that it certainly includes the Nature of a promissory Oath or Vow; that there’s not the least Circumstance wanting, which is requisite to the most solemn Oath possible. The Person who partakes of this Ordinance does in the Presence of God, and in the Face of the Congregation, by the solemn Acts of eating broken Bread and drinking Wine, which are previously consecrated, or set apart to represent the broken Body, and the Blood of Christ, according to his own divine Institution, *profess himself the Disciple of Christ*, and the Servant of the ever living God. Is not this taking God and the Church to witness that *he is under all the Ties and the Obligations of the Christian Religion?* * What more solemn Oath than this? Is not this vowing that the Lord shall be his God, that he will obey the Precepts of Christ, and follow his Example? But how is this Vow kept by the Man, who after receiving continues still a wilfull habitual Sinner? Solomon tells us *it’s better not to vow, than to vow and not pay.* But for a Man to go on Month after Month in the Breach of such repeated Oaths, in this solemn Mockery of Almighty God, how great a Crime! What Loads of Vengeance is not such a one heaping on himself! Let us try this Man also by the Rule you have laid down, p. 110. Can this Man be said to *have a due Sense of his past Sins*, who will not forsake them; who Month

* Every religious Ceremony implies in it the Profession of that Religion to which it peculiarly belongs; and by consequence, the owning themselves under all the Ties and Obligations of that particular Religion. And in this Sense receiving the Sacrament, is _____ the virtual owning our selves by this Action, under all the Obligations belonging to that Religion, p. 189.

Month after Month professes the sincerest Resolution to amend, yet wilfully continues in them. Such a one, you can hardly suppose, is *very* deeply affected with the Evil of Sin in general, and of his own Sins in particular, or has the *justest* Apprehensions of God's impending Wrath. And whatever are his sinful Habits, must they not be directly opposite to *such Dispositions of Mind as become Christians?* Be it Covetousness, Uncleanness, Drunkenness, Envy, Wrath, Malice, that he is guilty of, be it the habitual neglect of charitable Works, or of relative Duties, will you say that these any of them denote *such Dispositions of Mind as become Christians?* While a Man then continues under the Power of such Habits, how does he come up to your Rule? Let us try him again by what you say, p. 166. He that by sad Experience has found his Heart so often deceive him, that his best Resolutions like a Thread of scorched Tow have constantly given way at the Approach of the first Temptation, and that notwithstanding all his repeated Promises and Vows, he continues still the same habitual Sinner he was, has he any the least Reason to conclude on every first Sunday in the Month, that his Purposes of Repentance are sincere? Has he not all the Reason in the World to *suspect* the contrary? Can such a one then be said to come to the holy Supper, with an *honest* Resolution to amend? And if he does not, you your self have determined, that his Temper at the Time of eating and drinking is utterly unsuitable to the design of the Duty. Give me leave further to say, that if this Man's habitual Sin be open and scandalous, although he should not be deemed *an unworthy Receiver* in the precise Sense of St. Paul's Context, 1 Cor. xi. he certainly is so according

cording to St. Paul's precise Meaning, i Cor. v. who there gives express Order for the excluding such all Christian Society.

If the several Cases above-mentioned are to be determined in the manner I have done, it's very evident that the previous Examination which it's necessary every Man should make of his Heart and Life, must be carried further than what you will allow to be contained in the strict Sense of St. Paul's Exhortation to the *Corinthians*. And to say the Truth, you yourself extend it so* as to equal the Rule of yours before quoted, i. e. that every one ought to examine himself whether he comes to this holy Rite with Dispositions and a Behaviour suitable to the Design of it. You more fully expres yourself in explaining the Exhortation in the Communion Service, unless you mean not to extend this as a necessary Qualification for all, of which I have before shewn some doubt.† " If we come to it with such Dispositions of Mind as become Christians, and are agreeable to this Institution; particularly, with a due Sense of our past Sins, and a Resolution of behaving our selves as Christ's Disciples, and with a true Faith (or Belief) in him as sent into the World by God, we shall then with these Dispositions of Mind come to good purpose." It is then plainly necessary, that a Man should before he receives, satisfy himself with what View he comes to the holy Sacrament; whether the End he proposes be agreeable to the Design of the Institution; what are the Dispositions of his Mind, whether such as become a Christian, or not; particularly, whether he is fully determined to part with all his sinful Habits; whether he is willing, and has endeavoured to make all

all the Restitution he can to every one he has injur'd ; whether he is desirous to be reconciled to his offending Brother, upon his offering what Amends he is able to give ; whether he freely and from his Heart forgives all that have wronged him : Whether he has good Reason to hope, from the Watchfulness and Care of his past Conduct, that his Intentions and Resolutions to forsake every vicious Habit are sincere ; or whether by his Continuance in the same Sins, after repeated Vows to the contrary, he has not too much Reason to suspect the Treachery of his Heart, and to doubt the Truth and Sincerity of his Purposes. In these Things must a Man examine and *approve* himself, or he has not the *Dispositions of Mind becoming a Christian* ; he has not the true and genuine Fruits of a lively Faith in Christ. And is there any Writer of Note, that ever contended for more than these Things, as *absolutely necessary* to a Man's receiving the holy Communion ? I much question it. These alone are the Things insisted on by our Church in the Invitation she makes to her Members. " Ye that do *truly* and *earnestly* *repent* you " of your Sins, and are in *Love and Charity* with " your Neighbours, and intend to lead a new Life, " following the Commandments of God, and " walking from henceforth in his holy Ways; " draw near with Faith, and take this holy Sa- " crament to your Comfort ;" draw near with a firm Trust in God, that he will accept and reward your Service. And so much as this is insisted on by the late ingenious Dr. Burnet, Ma- ster of the Charter-House, in his Book *de fide & officiis hominis Christiani*, p. 80. where explain- ing the Christian Doctrine upon this Head, he says : " In the receiving these Symbols of

" Bread and Wine, we do not only require *Reverence* and *Piety*, but *universal Charity*, and
 " the laying aside all *Malice*. Then also we
 " renew the Engagements we made to God in
 " our Baptism, and where we find that we have
 " acted contrary to those Engagements, we re-
 " pent of it, and promise future Amendment of
 " Life and Manners." If there are no Writers
 (and I believe they must be very few, if any) who
 insist upon greater Qualifications than these, *as absolutely necessary* to a Man's receiving the holy
 Supper, to what purpose, Sir, was this Part of
 your Work? Whom do you oppose? Give me
 leave to expostulate this Matter freely with you.
 If you agree with all the Authors of Note in this
 Affair of *unworthy Receiving*, as, I think, I have
 clearly made appear, that at least while you were
 writing some Sentences in this Book you did,
 why do you affect to *seem* to differ from them?
 On the other hand, if you do not agree with
 them (as it must be *own'd* that in many Places
 you seem widely to differ,* and it's scarce possi-
 ble to gather your real Sentiments on this Head)
 I have fully proved in the foregoing Pages, that
 in such Cases wherein you dissent from them,
 your Doctrine must necessarily lead Men to the
 greatest Absurdities and Impieties. Should any
 have said that long Preparations are for *all* Per-
 sons, and at *all times necessary*, before the parta-
 king of this Ordinance (and excepting this has
 been said, I know not whom you oppose,) no
 doubt they are highly blame worthy. Yet cer-
 tainly every serious Christian would be glad of
 some Time before hand, to fix his Thoughts on
 the Greatness of Christ's Sufferings, and the a-
 mazing Benefits of his Love, in order to beget
 in

* Particularly, pag. 88, 89, 90.

in his Mind the warmest Sentiments of Gratitude to God the Father, for having given us so inestimable a Gift, and to his great Master; that he willingly undertook the Work of our Redemption, and endured such inexpressible Agonies in the accomplishing it ; that so his Remembrance of Christ when he actually partakes, may be accompanied with a due Contrition for all his past Sins, with the most ardent Love both to the Father and the Son, with the most earnest Desire and the firmest Resolution of universal Obedience for the Time to come.

You say, p. 76. “ Had not some among the *Corinthians* been guilty of great and criminal Indecencies at the very time of the Celebration, we had not heard of the Crime and Danger of eating and drinking unworthily.” Cou’d there then have been no such Crime, no eating and drinking unworthily ; no Danger consequent upon it, if this Part of St. Paul’s Epistle had been omitted or lost ? I think we might easily have found out the Crimes of this Sort by our own Reasonings. But this Sentence of yours, compar’d with the first Part of your Book, gives me a violent Suspicion, that had the other Passage in St. Paul (I mean, 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. *The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ : For we being many, are one Bread, and one Body, for we are all Partakers of that one Bread*) been omitted, you would have made the End of this Sacrament, the bare Remembrance of Christ. And shou’d any Christian Writers before you have said, that this Remembrance included in it the Acknowledgment of our being Members of that Body, of which he is the Head, and our Communion with all our Christian Brethren, as fellow Members of that same Body ; you wou’d

have called them down to the Words of Institution, and told them that no such Thing cou'd be fairly deduced from them ; that they had no Authority to add to the Words of Christ and his Apostles upon this Subject ; nor to put any Meaning or Interpretation upon those Words, but what is agreeable to the common Rules of speaking in like Cases, and to the declared Design of the Institution it self ; * though now indeed, as you have seen that part of St. Paul's Epistle, you can say, † This all flows from, or is included in the primary End of the Institution, the Remembrance of our Lord. And the reason of my Suspicion is, because you have denied other Consequences, as just, as clear, as easy to be deduced as this.

How far the Dissenters will think themselves oblig'd to you, I must leave them to tell : But it's certain, that if your Sentiments at least in one part of your Book are just, the most popular Argument they make use of for the Repeal of the Test is wrested from them. It's no Prostitution, no Profanation of the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, to admit the vilest of Mankind to come to it ; so much your Words amount to : || " Professed Christians, who were scandalously and notoriously immoral in the habitual and open Conduct of their Lives — who continued to bring a publick Disgrace upon their holy Profession, were not in *Justin Martyr's* Age debarr'd the common Worship of Christians, from any Thing peculiar to the Lord's Supper it self ; nor from any Opinion, that such Persons could not possibly come to it with good Dispositions, and eat and drink in such a manner, as not to fall under St. Paul's Denunciations." This, Sir, in truth,

* Pref. Pag. 6. † Pag. 58. || Pag. 88, 89, 90.

truth, is speaking your own Opinion, not that of the holy Fathers. You also in the same Place intimate very plainly, that none can at this Day be excluded the Communion amongst us without *Injustice*, the Consequence of which is, that the vilest and most abandon'd must be admitted.

Had I the Honour of your Friendship, and been near you when you wrote this Part of the Book, I shou'd have been apt to ask the following Questions: Whether if the *Corinthians* had, before their receiving the holy Supper, spent some time in Prayer and Meditation, recollecting the ultimate End of all positive Institutions in general, the Glory of God, and their final Happiness; a less remote End, their Holiness; in order to this, the Aptness of the Institution as a Mean, and the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit; thinking more particularly on the immediate End of the Ordinance they were going then to celebrate, the Remembrance of Christ's Death, the Covenant founded thereon, with all the inestimable Blessings contained in it, consider'd as flowing from the infinite Love of God the Father, and the most astonishing Condescension of the Son of God; as also a testifying their Union with Christ the Head, and their Communion with all Christians as being his Members: Had they add'd to these Meditations, earnest Prayers to God, that he wou'd assist them in the Performance of their Duty, and enable them to discharge it in such a manner, as that it might be both acceptable to him and beneficial to themselves, (I say, if the *Corinthians* had spent some time before their receiving in such Exercises as these, whether) it is likely they would have been guilty of the Indelicacies, they are charged with at the time of Receiving?

Whether

Whether such previous Exercises may not in this degenerate Age of the Church be the properest Expedient to prevent Indelicacies of that or any other Kind?

Whether, for this Reason, it be not fitting that Divines shou'd exhort Persons, thus to prepare themselves for that Ordinance, and extend their Directions for Self-Examination, so as to take in all Things which may frustrate the End of Receiving?

Whether the Benefits which you have described, as resulting from the Nature of this Duty, can otherwise arise from it, than by the Communicants exercising himself in long and serious Meditations?

The examining and judging our selves in the largest Sense of those Words of St. Paul, as generally a necessary Preparation for the worthy Receiving of the Lord's Supper, is well known to have been the current Doctrine of Divines, both at home and abroad, ever since the Reformation. Even *Crellius*, * the famous *Socinian* Writer, considers the Precept in that Extent, and lays before his Readers the particular Rules of Preparation for their eating and drinking worthily. *Slichtingius*, another *Socinian* Writer, interprets St. Paul's Text with the same Latitude; † so does *Przypcovius*. || *Limborch* the Dutch Remonstrant

* *Eth. Cbrift. Lib. 3 cap. 10.*

† *Slichtingius* in loc. Seipsum diligenter examinet, an Vitam Christiano homine dignam agat, an mores & facta sua omnia cum præceptis Christi congruant, an nihil in se ab hoc sacro ritu discrepans sit? Et postquam semetipsum quisq; probaverit tum deum ex hoc pane edat.

|| *Przypcovius* in loc. Monitum pernecessarium subjungit, ne ad tam sanctum negotium nisi explorata penitus & excussa Conscientia nostra & corde quasi mundato accedamus.

monstrant lays down the same Rules with *Crellius.* || So far were *these Writers* from labouring to convince Christians that they might be *worthy Partakers* according to the Meaning of St. Paul without any of those Preparations.

The Superstition you seem chiefly to have aimed at in this Work, has been guarded against by the late learned Dr. Clarke in so just, so clear, so distinct a manner, and yet in so very few Words, that I cannot forbear reciting them:

“ Though it becomes us highly upon every
 “ solemn Occasion to trim our Lamps, to set
 “ our Garments in order, to excite our most
 “ affectionate Devotion, to lay aside for the
 “ present all secular and worldly Thoughts,
 “ and to examine more strictly and particularly
 “ into the State and Disposition of our Souls,
 “ as Time and Opportunity offers, without
 “ anxious and superstitious Sollicitude; yet
 “ where this is by any Accident prevented, good
 “ Men are by the habitual Course of a virtuous
 “ Life in a continual, general Preparation,
 “ and may at all Times as safely communicate
 “ without Scruple, as it is certain, that a vici-
 “ and debauched Person can at no time be fit
 “ to do it by any formal Preparation of a few
 “ Days Devotion. †

It

|| *Limburch. in Theol. Chr.*

† Serm. Vol. IV. Pag. 194. Archbishop *Tillotson* in his *Peruasive to frequent Communion* to the same Purpose. “ It
 “ is very true that none but those who do heartily embrace the
 “ Christian Religion, and are sincerely resolved to frame their
 “ Lives according to the holy Rules and Precepts of it,
 “ are fit to communicate in this solemn Acknowledgment
 “ and Profession of it. So that it’s a Practice *very much* to
 “ be *countenanced* and *encouraged*, because it’s of great Use
 “ for Christians, by way of Preparation for the Sacrament,
 “ to examine themselves in a larger Sense than in all Pro-
 “ bability

It has been the great Support and Comfort of all good Christians, that our Saviour has promised to be with his Church to the End of Time; and that he is by his Spirit present in all their Assemblies. I take not upon me to say that you think this is all Presumption and Delusion, but this I must affirm, that you seem willing to abate their Confidence: “The Promise of Christ’s “ being in the midst of us, as far as it relates to “ Christians of later Ages, belongs to our assembling “ in

“ bability the Apostle here intended; I mean, to examine our “ past Lives, and the Actions of them, in order to a sincere “ Repentance of all our Errors and Miscarriages, and to fix “ us in the steady Purpose and Resolution of a better Life; “ particularly when we expect to have the Forgiveness of our “ Sins sealed to us, we should lay aside all Enmity and “ Thoughts of Revenge, and heartily forgive those that “ have offended us, and put in practice that universal Love “ and Charity, which is represented to us by this holy Communion. — Because the examining ourselves is a Thing “ so very useful, and the Time which Men are wont to set “ apart for their Preparation for the Sacrament, is so *advantageous an Opportunity* for the Practice of it; therefore I “ cannot but *very much* commend those who take this Oc- “ casion to search and try their Ways, and call themselves “ to a more solemn Account of their Actions, because this “ ought to be done some Time, and I know no fitter Time “ for it than this. And perhaps some would never find “ time to recollect themselves, and to take the Condition of “ their Souls into serious Consideration, were it not upon this “ solemn Occasion. The Sum of what I have said is this, “ that supposing a Person to be habitually prepared by a re- “ ligious Disposition of Mind, and the general Course of a “ good Life, this *more solemn actual Preparation* is not *al-* “ *ways necessary*. And it’s better when there’s an Oppor- “ tunity to receive without it, than not to receive at all; “ but the greater our *actual Preparation* is, the better. For “ no Man can examine himself too often, and understand “ the State of his Soul too well, and exercise Repentance, “ and renew the Resolutions of a good Life too frequently. “ And there is perhaps no fitter Opportunity for the doing “ all this, than when we approach the Lord’s Table: There “ to commemorate his Death, and *renew our Covenant* with “ him, to live as becomes the Gospel.”

in his Name." These are your Words. * Can any one judge by this, whether you are of Opinion that it belongs to Christians of the present Age or not? Did it not become you to have explained how far you thought it did belong to them, and what Expectation a Christian may now reasonably form? Pray, Sir, bear with me if I ask the Meaning of the following Passage of your Book? † " What reasonable Creature wou'd
 " not be content with Benefits of this Sort (i. e.
 such as in the Nature of the Thing itself are implied
 in this Rite of the holy Supper, or result from it)
 " which are always of substantial and lasting
 " Service, without fancying to himself Privile-
 " ges, Communications, or Impressions from above
 " of another Sort, never expressly promised to this
 " Duty." You have for many Pages together
 before this been labouring to prove, that it has
 not pleased God to annex any Promise of his Spi-
 rit to this Duty in express Words. Do you in-
 tend then to exclude all Communications of God's
 Spirit from this Ordinance? Is it to be thought
 that God has appointed Means for our Improve-
 ment in all Holiness of Life, and will not grant
 us the Assistance of his Spirit, the Sanctifier, in
 the Use of those Means? If a Person worthily
 partakes of this divine Institution through the
 Assistance of God's Spirit, (and it must be thro' that alone that he can worthily partake of it) will not further Communications of the same Spirit be granted? Did not our Saviour add to the Parable of the Talents that remarkable Saying, *To him that bath shall be given, and he shall have more Abundance,* i. e. to him that improves the Assistance already granted, shall more be given as a Reward of his Diligence? Give me leave to

D

add

add here the Sentiments of the late learned Dr. Clarke, who, I believe, was seldom condemned for want of a sufficient Latitude in his Way of thinking. " If all publick Devotions, being
 " Ordinances of God's own Appointment as
 " Means and Instruments of Religion, have still
 " a greater Assurance of God's Blessing attend-
 " ing them; how much more in this most solemn of
 " all religious Actions, in this great Commemo-
 " ration of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ,
 " is it reasonable to believe that pious and well
 " disposed Minds are, by the Assistance of the Spi-
 " rit of God, which delights to dwell in heaven-
 " ly and devout Hearts, improved in all reli-
 " gious Affections, and strengthened unto the
 " acceptable Obedience of a holy Life? " †
 And again, " Is it not evidently a great and in-
 " estimable Benefit, if through the Assistance of the
 " Spirit of God, annexed not to the material E-
 " lements, or to the outward Action, but to
 " the Ordinance partaken of by truly devout and
 " well disposed Minds, their Faith in God be
 " increased, their Hope and Trust in him be
 " strengthened," &c. || Once more, " Those
 " Gifts of the Spirit, in which consists the Re-
 " newal of the Mind of Man, and which are
 " the Springs of all Virtues, which make us
 " like unto God; these are to continue through all
 " Ages, and are so much more excellent and
 " more desirable than the former, as the End
 " is better and more excellent than the
 " Means." * And those Words of our Savi-
 " our, Mat. xxviii. 20. *Lo, I am with you always*
to the End of the World, he paraphrases thus:
 " I must depart, yet the holy Ghost whom I
 " will

† Serm. Vol. IV. p. 187.
 * Serm. Vol. V. p. 269.

|| Serm. Vol. IV. p. 185.

“ will send shall always be with you, and guide
 “ and assist you and your Successors to the End of
 “ the World. ||

You will not allow the Communion to be a *Renewal of the new Covenant on our Part*, or, the *Seal of it on God's Part*; and yet, Sir, what you do allow, fully amounts to the Sense of both. You insist upon it, that the Word *Renewal* implies in it a preceding Breach of the whole Covenant which we had entred into. For my own part, I always thought that to *renew* a Promise and to *repeat* a Promise had signified one and the same Thing; that if I should say to a Person, “ I have formerly made you such a Promise, and “ I assure you that I intend to perform it, and “ to that End I now *renew* it, or *repeat* it to “ you; ” that either of these Expressions had been proper. However, I suppose no one will differ with you about the Use of a Word; you are doubtless at Liberty to assign what Ideas you please to your own Words; but, on the other hand, I think you ought to act by the same Rule, and not make the Use of Words a Ground of differing from others in those Things of which they have plainly the same Ideas with yourself. You say, * “ This Rite duly performed is the “ Profession of our own Relation to Christ,
 “ and Obligation to obey all his Laws; ” and
 “ † receiving the Sacrament is the Performance
 “ of a religious Ceremony peculiar to the Chri-
 “ stian Religion, and the virtual owning ourselves
 “ by this Action under all the Obligations belonging to
 “ that Religion.” Consequently it is the pro-
 fessing and acknowledging ourselves under our
 baptismal Obligations, it is the *renewing*, or, if
 you chuse that Word rather, the *repeating* the

D 2

Promises

Promises we made at our Baptism. I am very much afraid, Sir, that you have dropped Baptism wholly out of your Scheme, look upon it as a Rite that was not design'd for a Continuance in the Christian Church, and therefore of no significance in the present Age. For I am very sure you must have seen so plain and obvious a Consequence as this. But notwithstanding this Consequence, so easy, so familiar, and which could not but be thought on, you deny the Lord's Supper to be a *Federal or Covenanting Rite* || : It is, you own, the *professing our own Relation to Christ, and Obligation to obey all his Laws*; consequently it is the professing that we are his covenanted Servants. Does this Profession of ours imply a Promise? Yes, you say, ‡ *we are hereby obliged as truly, as by an Oath, to all the Practice becoming Christians.* Again, *the very Action itself is owning our selves under all the Obligations belonging to the Christian Religion.* Are we then under Covenant Bonds, or are we not? Possibly if we are not under Covenant by Baptism, we may be under this Engagement some other Way. Yes, the New Covenant, you say, is * “ accepted and entred into by every Man personally on his own Part, at the instant of his first sincerely believing in Christ, and professing himself his Disciple.” Well then, you do allow that at least all *Sincere Believers, who are Professors*, are under Covenant Obligations. When they receive the Sacrament then, what do they do? Own themselves under Covenant, they † *solemnly acknowledge and recognize the Obligations of this Covenant.* I hope then to them, at least, it is a *Federal or Covenanting Rite.*

You

You tell us, || “ If the Lord’s Supper succeed
 “ in the Place of the Passover, this will help to
 “ shew that it cannot be a Fœderal or Cove-
 “ nanting Rite,” whereas from this it is mani-
 festly prov’d to be so. The paschal Supper (you
 well know, however you come now to conceal
 that from your Reader) was a Feast upon a Sa-
 crifice. Both *Jews* and *Heathens* in feasting up-
 on Sacrifices declar’d, vow’d and covenanted,
 that they wou’d be each the Servant of that God,
 to whom the Sacrifice they fed upon had been
 offered, and professed that they ought to be so
 slain, as the sacrificed Beast was, if ever they
 deserted his Service. And is not the holy Com-
 munion a Feast upon the Memorials of the great
 Christian Sacrifice typified by the paschal Lamb?
 It’s true, we cannot feast upon the Sacrifice it
 self, but we feast upon those Things which natu-
 rally represent it, were instituted to that End,
 and substituted in its room. This therefore
 has most plainly the Nature of a Feast upon a
 Sacrifice, and succeeds the *Jewish* Feasts upon
 their Sacrifices. If they were Fœderal or Cove-
 nanting Rites, there’s no doubt to be made but
 this is. You shou’d therefore, I think, have
 made it appear beyond Contradiction, that the
 ancient Feasts upon Sacrifices were not Fœderal
 Rites; and have confuted what *Mede*, *Spencer*,
 and other very learned Men have wrote upon
 that Subject, if you wou’d haye prov’d your
 Point. You say, “ the Apostle *Paul* in *1 Cor.*
 “ x. says not a Word of these Feasts being Fœ-
 “ deral Rites.” It was a Thing so well known
 at that Time, there was not the least Occasion
 for a particular mentioning it. The Word
Fellowship which he uses, convey’d to them a
 perfect

perfect Idea of it, signifying the Friendship or League which they hereby cultivated with that Deity, to whom the Sacrifices they feasted upon were offered. And I cannot think but you your self will allow, that upon the Supposition of this Fact, the Apostle's Argument in this Place is more strong and cogent.

In denying the Lord's Supper to be a Fœderal Rite, you oppose your self to well nigh all the Divines that have ever mention'd the Subject. To quote Passages to this Purpose wou'd be endless: The late Dr. Clarke in his *Exposition of the Church Catechism* has these Words: " By the one (i. e. Baptism) we solemnly vow and promise to give our selves up to the Guidance of the Spirit of Holiness, and to the Obedience of God's Commands; by the other (i. e. the Lord's Supper) we perpetually repeat and ratify, confirm and renew that Vow; and lay afresh upon our selves the most solemn Obligation to endeavour constantly with God's Assistance to perform it." And again some Pages after, " By doing this constantly and devoutly in Remembrance of Christ, and shewing forth the Lord's Death till he come, we renew and confirm continually our own part in the christian Covenant.* "

You admit not that the Lord's Supper is the Seal of the Covenant on God's Part; I beg, Sir, attend a little to what you do admit, p. 131. " Almighty God, on his Part, requiring and accepting our due Performance of this Part of

* To the same purpose Scot's Christian Life, V. 2. Part 2. p. 178. Burnet's Art. p. 266, 268. Ham. Catech. p. 167. Dissent. Cases, Vol. 3. p. 116. Tillotson. Vol. 1. p. 227. Limborch. The. Chr. p. 603. Stillingf. Iren. Part 2. c. 2. §. 5, &c.

" our Duty, does by this *assure* us, who come
 " to profess our selves the Disciples of Christ,
 " that we are in his Favour. Or, in other
 " Words, the Lord's Supper being instituted
 " as the Memorial of his Goodness towards us
 " in Christ Jesus, may justly be looked upon
 " as a *Token and Pledge* to *assure* us of what it
 " calls to our Remembrance, viz. that God is
 " ready to pardon and bless us, upon the Terms
 " proposed by his Son, and consequently that
 " we are received by him as the Disciples of
 " Christ, Members of his Body the Church,
 " and Heirs of his heavenly Kingdom; in a
 " word, as Persons entitled to all the Happi-
 " nesses promis'd to Christians, if we be not
 " wanting to our selves in other Parts of our
 " Duty." And,† " It may be consider'd also
 " as a *Pledge* on Christ's Part to *assure* us of
 " all this, i. e. all the Benefits of his Body
 " broken and blood shed, now called to mind
 " by these outward Signs." Does any one mean
 more than this by saying that the Lord's Sup-
 per is a *Seal*? Do not they who use it intend to
 express hereby, that it is an *Affurance* on God's
 Part, that he is ready to grant to the worthy Re-
 ceiver, who perseveres in his Duty to the End, all
 the Blessings promis'd in the Covenant of Grace?
 Indeed you hint, p. 158. as though some should
 have said that " this Communion is the *actual*
 " partaking of all the Benefits of Christ's Body
 " broken and blood shed." They must mean it
 of *all those only* of which the Christian is capable
 in this present State of Tryal. No one I sup-
 pose doubts that the greatest Blessings are re-
 serv'd for a future State. I am apt to think there
 are few who have us'd the Word *Seal*, but wou'd
 as

as willingly use the Words *Token* or *Pledge*. A *Pledge*, I believe, is generally esteem'd among Men a better Security than a *Seal*, and therefore shou'd be the stronger Expression of the *Affurance* which is by this Ordinance given us. A *Seal* is an arbitrary Mark agreed on amongst Men, to denote the Confirmation of a Contract or Covenant, *i. e.* each of the contracting Parties by this Mark assures the other that he will, and obliges himself to perform his Part of the Covenant. The holy Supper, according to your own Account, is a *Mark* or *Token* appointed by Christ to *assure* us of all the Blessings contained in the new Covenant. And does he not by every *Affurance* he gives us hereof oblige himself to a Performance? Where then is the Difference? No; but "it's the Blood of Christ is the *Seal* of the new "Covenant." The word *Seal*, Sir, expresses to us the great Importance of Christ's Death but very imperfectly. The new Covenant was entirely founded upon it, and the gracious Terms therein purchas'd by it: How these Things are included in the Notion of a *Seal*, I can't see. But the Passage I refer to being a remarkable one, I must produce it, it is p. 168. "Christ's "Death, or Christ's Blood, consider'd as the "Proof he voluntarily gave, that the Terms "brought by him to Mankind from God were "truly what he represented them to be, is by a "Figure of Speech called the *Seal* of the new "Covenant: And he may be said to have seal- "ed it with his Blood, as his Death was the "strongest Proof he could give of the Reality "of his own and of his Father's Affection towards "Mankind." Not a word here of Expiation, Satisfaction, or the Necessity of Christ's Death, to mitigate the Terms, and procure for us the favourable

favourable Allowances of the Law of Grace. Possibly these Things would not so easily come into the Notion of a *Seal*, and therefore were omitted; yet, so far as they tend to *assure* to us the Divine Favour, they might not unfitly be thus represented. But pray, Sir, give me leave to ask how the Blood of the burnt Offerings and Sacrifices was the Seal of the Law Covenant? For this you assert, p. 171. Was their Death *a Proof that the Terms brought by Moses to the Israelites were truly what be represented them to be?* Did the Blood of the slain Beasts bear *Testimony to the Truth of what Moses had said, in order to assure the Israelites more undoubtedly of the Remission of their Sins, or of any other Benefits of that Covenant?**

I must own, were it not for the Seriousness of the Subject, I should smile to see you so laboriously arguing, for three or four Pages together, that the Lord's Supper cannot be called the *Seal* of the Covenant, because Christ's Blood is the *Seal*; as though the Word *Seal* might not be metaphorically applied to more Things than one, when each bears the requisite Similitude. Is the Word *Seal* any where used by Christ or his Apostles, to signify the Blood of Christ; and is it appropriated by them to his Death in such a manner as to make it unlawful to apply it to any Thing else? Or, on the other hand, is it not an Expression invented by Men uninspired, who have just as much Reason to use it for one Thing, as for another, where the Likeness equally strikes the Imagination? No; but "the "Lord's Supper, you urge, is the Remembrance of that Seal, i. e. of Christ's Blood "shed long ago, and therefore cannot be the re-

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" ceiving

* Pag. 20, 21.

"ceiving of the *Seal* itself. It destroys the Notion of Remembrance, to suppose his Blood present. Consequently the *Seal* here remembred cannot be present." It's true, the *Blood* of Christ is not itself present, but there is that present which is appointed by Christ to represent it, and which he himself calls his *Blood*. And why the Bread and Wine may not be called the *Seal* of the New Covenant, for the same Reason that they are called Christ's *Body* and *Blood*, I cannot for the heart of me see. Nothing is more common than to call the Representatives of Things by the Names of the Things themselves which they represent. If then the Bread and Wine are Representatives of the *Seal* of the New Covenant, what forbids that they should be termed the *Seal*? And since we receive these by the express Command of God, why may it not be said that we receive his *Seal*, or that God puts to his *Seal*?

And now, Sir, I beg of you calmly to consider, whether the Things you have here written do not manifest too great a Disposition in you to find fault with what has been said by others before you. The Sacrament, it seems, according to you, is not an *Oath* of Fidelity to the great Captain of our Salvation, but we are hereby obliged as truly as by an *Oath* to all the Practice becoming Christians. It is not renewing the Covenant, but it is owning and professing our selves to be under all the Ties and Obligations of our holy Religion. It is not a *Federal Rite*, but it is the solemn acknowledging and recognizing the Covenant we have entred into. It is not a *Seal*, but it is a *Pledge*. Was it not well worth the while to write a Book to inform the World in these over nice Distinctions? Especially, when you reflect on what you have said, p. 15, 16. concerning the different

different Relations which the Evangelists make of our Saviour's own Words: " Some record fewer Words, and some more, and all plainly think it sufficient to represent exactly the Intent of the whole." And again, " Which of the two was the very Expression, is of little Importance, since they both tend to the same End, and design the same Thing." May not this be said with much greater Force concerning Expressions dropp'd by uninspired Writers?

I proceed next, Sir, to lay before you the Reasons which prevail with me to think you have given up several principal Articles of our Faith. I don't say you have fully opened your Mind, but if I understand aright, you insinuate the following Opinions.

That the Corruption of our Nature by Adam's Fall, if any, is not such as to make it needful that we obtain the regenerating, sanctifying Influences of the holy Ghost, before we are enabled to discharge any Duty acceptably to God; that it's not necessary that Infants should be baptized; and that there was no Atonement or Satisfaction for Sin made by the Death of Christ.

As in the Forms of Prayer you have compos'd, you never mention the original Taint or natural Bias to Evil, and consequently never petition for the Assistance of the divine Spirit against it; so you never once in your whole Work, as I remember, speak of the holy Ghost as our Sanctifier, or ascribe our good Deeds to his Influence. Nay, in many Places where one might reasonably expect to find you saying something of this Kind, you seem designedly to omit it. Thus in the Prayer which you put into the Mouth of your Communicant, p. 122, &c. And in enumerating the Benefits of receiving, p. 153, &c. Indeed you

proceed further in these two Places, and, as I apprehend, explain the Reason of your Omission. For, p. 154. you say "The Benefits received
 " from all such Performances by reasonable
 " Creatures, cannot possibly be received but in
 " a reasonable Way. These Duties how well
 " soever performed cannot be supposed to ope-
 " rate as *Charms*; nor to influence us as if we
 " were only *Clock-work or Machines*, to be acted
 " upon by the arbitrary Force of a superior
 " Being." It's very possible many may enter-
 tain wrong and unbecoming Notions of the man-
 ner in which the holy Spirit operates on the hu-
 man Soul; but is this a justifiable Reason why
 you should so sparingly mention his Operations? Had you thought the sanctifying Influence of the holy Ghost an essential Part of the Christian Religion, you would doubtless have given us your own Notion of it, and inculcated it strongly. I cannot therefore but conclude, that you look upon it as no necessary Part of our Faith. You go on to fence against these mistaken Opinions, p. 156, 157. "The Lord's Supper a-
 " mongst other Means, helps to render us fit
 " for all such Assurances as are proper for God
 " to give to free and reasonable Creatures." And you put into the Mouth of the Communi-
 cant these Words, p. 125. "Direct and assist
 " me in all my Endeavours, by all such Me-
 " thods as are proper to move and assist thy
 " free and reasonable Creatures." And by
 this Key probably is to be explained the
 Phrase you use, p. 181. of *supernatural Favours*,
 and that p. 156. of *Communications and Impress-
 ions* from above. It's a fashionable Thing now to
 exclude all *Mysteries in Religion*, and every
 Thing we cannot comprehend, is deemed of
 that

that Number. For this Reason some have denied all Prophecies, because they cannot conceive how Events which depend on the human Will, are knowable before they happen. For the same Reason, the sanctifying Influence of the Holy Spirit is exploded by others ; they can't understand how it is consistent with free Agency. And may we not as well deny all created free Agency ? Is it not as difficult to form a Notion, how a Being that is dependant on another for the Exercise of every Faculty, should be free in his Operations ; as that he shou'd be assisted in the Exercise of his weakened depraved Powers, and yet freely exercise them ? And where indeed shall we stop, if we will allow the Truth of nothing, but what we are able to comprehend ?

There are other Places, Sir, in your Work, not a few, in which one might reasonably have expected, that you shou'd have mention'd Regeneration and Sanctification, as the Effects of God's holy Spirit; particularly in your Explication of *1 Cor. xii. 13.* p. 133. which takes up 9 or 10 Pages. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body ; whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit :* you wholly omit to explain the first Words, *by one Spirit,* and take no more Notice of them than if they were not there ; and this notwithstanding you profess, “ *to consider the Words and Phrases made use of,* as well as the main Design of the Writer, in the whole Passage to which it belongs.” You mention here some good Interpreters with whom you differ, and particularly the late most ingenious M. *Locke.* And indeed, considering the Opinion you had form'd to your self, about the Fruits and Benefits of Receiving, it nearly concern'd you to get rid of this

this Text, if Mr. Locke's Paraphrase upon the latter Part of it, be as right as it is agreeable to the Sense of our best Divines. " The Blood of Christ, says he, " which we all partake of in the Lord's Supper, makes us all have one Life, one Spirit, as the same Blood diffused through the whole Body, communicates the same Life and Spirit to all the Members."

In your Forms of Prayer, one wou'd think, shou'd be frequent mention made of the holy Spirit, at least one Petition for so great a Gift in each Form; especially, since you tell us, p. 159, 160. " that the obtaining of God's holy Spirit, is a Benefit which our Saviour himself has annex'd to the Duty of Prayer." But that we may not be too much disappointed in our Expectations, you add in the same Place, " Whatever the Nature and Degree of that Benefit be, according to the different Ages of the Church, and the various Necessities of Christians." Accordingly we find these three Petitions only, which make any mention of the Spirit of God.

" Guide and govern me by thy Holy Spirit, in my sincere Endeavours to attain everlasting Life, p. 212. fin. 213. pr.

" Guide me by the Dispositions of thy Providence and good Spirit, to the perfect Knowledge and Performance of thy holy Will." p. 243.

" We beseech thee to concur with us by thy merciful Providence and good Spirit, that in the future Conduct of our Lives, we may better answer the Ends of our holy Religion," p. 248.

How is it possible your Disciples shou'd understand what they here pray for? You have warn'd them against expecting Communications

to bring up now 3 reasons why and
and

and Impressions from above.† You may possibly say, you confin'd that Warning to their *Act* of receiving the holy Supper: But as that *Act* is always accompanied with Prayers, what need cou'd there be of such a Caution? And why did you not plainly tell them, that although they were not to fancy to themselves Privileges, Communications and Impressions from above, upon account of their Receiving, yet they might justly expect these, at least the two last named, from the Prayers, with which their *Act of Receiving* was joined? And where have you once throughout your whole Book, inform'd them that the Guidance and Governance of the Holy Spirit, are (according to your own Words,) such Assurances as are proper for God to give to free and reasonable Creatures; or explain'd in what manner they are so? How then does it appear to have been your great Aim to direct them to perform this Duty, at least in this Instance of it, under the Conduct of their Understandings? as you profess.* However, be the meaning of these Passages what they will, I think it's very evident, you did not design them as Petitions for the Assistance of God's Spirit against the original Corruption of our Nature; not only because you never once mention original Sin throughout your whole Work, but because of that plain Hint given us in the beginning of your fourth Form of Prayer, || "I intreat the Pardon of whatsoever thou hast seen amiss in me, from the beginning of my rational Life unto this Day." And in the third Prayer, ∵ to the same Purpose.

Add to these Petitions your own qualifying Clauses, and what do they dwindle to? Guide and govern me by thy holy Spirit, whatever the Nature

† P. 156. * Pref. p. 202. || P. 214. ∵ P. 208.

Nature and Degree of this Benefit be, in the present Age of the Church, and my Necessity at this Time. This, I imagine, being esteem'd an enlightened and pure Age, the Necessity of his Direction and Assistance now, must of course be small. Concur with us by thy merciful Providence and good Spirit, so far as the Concurrence of thy good Spirit relates to us Christians of later Ages? Little enough shou'd I be apt to conclude were I thus taught. This, I think, is all the mention you make of the holy Spirit of God, in the five Forms of Prayer you have compos'd; excepting that in the long Form of 30 Pages, you bless God for the Evidence Christ gave of his Mission, by his pouring down from Heaven *the wonderful Gifts of the holy Spirit;* but no Acknowledgments are made for the Strivings and Motions of the blessed Spirit, or any internal Assurances receiv'd from him in the Discharge of Duty. In the Explication of Cor. xii. 13. you have it's true this Passage, " Every one of the moral Virtues is indeed represented by St. Paul as the Fruit of the Christian Spirit; the genuine Work and Produce of Christianity, in opposition to the Works of the Flesh;" but this only proves that you interpret St. Paul's Words in the Epistles referr'd to, not of the third Person in the ever blessed Trinity; but of the Christian Temper and Disposition, such as is taught and inculcated in the Doctrines of Christianity, and what you call, p. 111. *partaking of the good Spirit of Christ's Gospel.* What further confirms me, that I have given a just Representation of your Sentiments concerning the Influence of God's Spirit, is a Passage in p. 116. " They who embrace an obscure Notion of receiving any other sort of cleansing or washing from this holy Rite, seem to me to delude them-

"themselves," i. e. any other sort than what you have in the foregoing Words mention'd; but you have not in them mention'd the *sanctifying Grace* of the *Holy Spirit*; this therefore was intended to be excluded by you. And your describing those who expect it, as *embracing an obscure and delusive Notion*, fully authorises the Application I have made of some foregoing Quotations to this Subject, and the Conclusion drawn from them. Allow me here again to add the Words of the late learned Dr. Clarke, "God knoweth our Enemy's Strength and our own Weakness, and therefore he affords us the continual Assistance of his *Holy Spirit*, to supply our natural Want of Power."* Again, "At Pentecost the Holy Ghost fell upon the Apostles, in a singular and most miraculous Manner, beyond the Examples of former Inspirations. And by the continual Assistance, and ordinary Operations of the same Spirit, has our Lord promis'd. to be with us, his true Disciples; to be in the midst of them, whenever two or three are gathered together in his Name, even unto the End of the World."† Again, the holy Spirit is in Scripture represented, as being to the Church in the Place of Christ, and for that very Reason is styled the Comforter: Because his proper Office is, in the Absence of Christ, to comfort the Faithful with his Gifts and Graces, with his holy Influence and Assistance. || Yet once more, To those who were to spread the Gospel, their being baptized with the Holy Ghost was accompanied with miraculous Gifts. But when the Reason of these miraculous Operations

* Serm. Vol. V. p. 201.

† Serm. Vol. V. p. 354.

|| Serm. Vol. IV. p. 222.

"tions ceased, yet still every Christian is *baptized*
 "with the *Holy Ghost* as well as with Water, and
 "his internal sanctifying Gifts and Graces are
 "to *continue* with us always, even unto the End
 "of the World. If any one has not receiv'd
 "these Gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, it may still
 "be asked him with the same Propriety as
 "in the Text, *Unto what then was he Bap-*
tized? If any Man has not in him the Spirit of
 "Christ; if he does not shew forth in his Life
 "the Fruits of the Spirit by Works of Right-
 "eousness and true Piety; if his Heart be not
 "sanctified by this Spirit of Holiness; if his
 "Mind approves not and delights not in Things
 "spiritual; if his Will obeys not the good *Mo-*
tions of this divine Assister—to what Pur-
 "pose then was such a Person *baptized*? ||

You have favour'd us with a Comment upon
 the Office of our Church for the Administra-
 tion of the holy Supper; had you done the same
 with Regard to that for Infant Baptism, we need-
 ed not to have been at so much Difficulty to
 learn your meaning, concerning the Operations
 of the Holy Spirit. But to say the Truth, you
 have one Passage which in my Apprehension
 makes full against the baptizing of Infants; it is
 p. 170. "The Covenant is accepted and entered
 "into by every Man *personally* on his own Part,
 "at the Instant of his first sincerely believing in
 "Christ, and professing himself his Disciple. Be-
 "fore this, no Rite can *personally* engage him in
 "this Covenant, because no one can be *personally*
 "engaged in a Religion, which he has not *per-
 sonally* agreed to: Tho' he may be justly liable
 "to Punishment for wilfully and unreasonably
 "refusing to enter into it, when duly and plain-

" by

" I offered him on the part of Almighty God.
 It's very possible, I may mistake your Design in this Place; but if I do, I cannot but say it's very oddly express'd. I lay the Stress, Sir, upon that Assertion, " Before this, no Rite can personally engage him in this Covenant;" and the Reasoning joined with it; both which, in my poor Judgment, were entirely needless, and meer Tautology, if you intended to convey no other Idea by the words *Personally* engage, than a Man's engaging by his own proper Act and Deed. For this you had fully and clearly express'd in the first Sentence, and there was no Occasion for more Words to make it plainer. When therefore you add, " Before this, no Rite can personally engage him in this Covenant; because no one can be personally engaged in a Religion, which he has not personally agreed to," you seem to me to have chang'd the Sense of the word *Personally* the two first times it here occurs, and to hint that the Rite of Baptism administred to Infants is of no Service.* For if the Persons of Infants be not en-
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* What I here suggest, will easily be perceived by substituting the Words *by his own Act and Deed*, in the room of the Word *Personally*. " Before this, i. e. before a Man has Personally on his own Part accepted and entered into the Covenant, by sincerely believing in Christ, and professing himself his Disciple, no Rite can by his own Act and Deed engage him in this Covenant; because no one can by his own Act and Deed be engaged in a Religion, which he has not by his own Act and Deed agreed to. This is manifestly proving a Thing by it self; and indeed how otherwise should it be proved, for the Proposition is self-evident. It is as much as to say, before a Man by his own Act and Deed becomes Christ's Disciple, no Rite can by his own Act and Deed make him his Disciple, because no one can by his own Act and Deed, be engaged in a Religion, which he is not by his own Act and Deed engaged in." But if

gaged in the Christian Religion, it's most certain Infants are not at all engaged in it, they are no Part of God's covenanted People, and their Baptism useless. I should rejoice to find that I have mistaken your Opinion in this, and indeed in every other Thing I have insisted on.

As to the nevt Article, unless you had in so many express Words said, that there was no Atonement or Satisfaction for Sin made by the Death of Christ, you could not have discovered your Mind in a plainer manner than you have done, p. 20, 21. where in commenting upon those Words of our Saviour, " This is my " Blood of the new Testament, which is shed for " many for the Remission of Sins," you make him speak thus, " I call the Wine my Blood of the " new Covenant, as it is to be drunk by you " hereafter in remembrance of my Blood *shed* " *by me in Testimony to the Truth of all that I have declared, as the Will or Covenant of God;* con- " taining what he promises on his Part, and " what he requires all Believers to undertake on " their Part. And for the same Reason, I style " this Cup, or this Wine, the new Covenant in " my Blood; because you are hereafter thus to " drink Wine in a religious Remembrance of " my Blood, in or through which, after it shall
" be

the Word *Personally*, in two of these Places be taken to signify, not by a Man's own *Act and Deed*, but with *Relation to his Person*, or *so far as concerns his Person*, this Tautology is avoided. Before that a Man by his own *Act and Deed* professes himself Christ's Disciple, no Rite can engage him, so far as concerns his Person; or in other Words no Rite can engage his Person in this Covenant, because no one's Person can be engaged in a Religion, which he has not by his own *Act and Deed* agreed to. The Meaning of which is, that no one can be laid under Obligation by his Tutors, Guardians or Parents, in Matters of Religion, as he may be in the civil Affairs of Life; which strikes directly at Infant Baptism.

" be shed, this new Covenant will be confirmed as
 " by a Seal or Testimony to the Truth of it; in or-
 " der to assure you the more undoubtedly of the Re-
 " mission of your Sins, stipulated in that Covenant,
 " upon true Repentance and Amendment." What
 is there ascrib'd here to our Saviour's Death,
 more than is true with Regard to that of St. Ste-
 phen, or the other Martyrs? They shed their
 Blood in Testimony to the Truth of the Gospel.
 They confirm'd it each one by his Death, as by a
 Seal, or Testimony to the Truth of it; that they
 might assure all their christian Brethren of the
 certain Fulfilment of its Promises, and parti-
 cularly of the Remission of their Sins, stipulated in
 it upon true Repentance and Amendment. Had
 you believ'd that Christ in his Death offered up
 himself a Propitiatory Sacrifice, to make A-
 tonement and Satisfaction for Sin to the Father,
 no doubt you wou'd have here declar'd it, and
 not have given us an Interpretation, which is so
 far from being peculiar to the Death of Christ,
 that it agrees to that of all who have laid down
 their Lives for the Truth of the Gospel. It is
 very remarkable also, that in your explaining
 the Communion Office, although you comment
 upon some Part of the Prayer of Consecration,
 you artfully slide over the Recognition made
 by our Church, " That Christ suffer'd Death
 " upon the Cross for our Redemption, and
 " made there (by his one Oblation of himself once
 " offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Ob-
 " lation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole
 " World." Had these Words express'd your own
 Sentiments, you had the fairest Opportunity in the
 World of declaring your entire Approbation of
 them, and thereby supplying what was want-
 ing in your foregoing Comment on our Saviour's

Words.

Words. But if they do not clearly express your Sentiments, you ought at least to have instructed your Disciples in what manner they should mould and fashion them; or what other Words should be used in the room of them. In fine, the Subject - Matter of your Book being the Death of Christ as represented to us in the Lord's Supper, lead you frequently to acquaint your Reader with the Benefits we receive by his Death: But where have you once put him in mind that the *Satisfaction* thereby made to God for his Sins, is one of the Benefits that he is to remember? In how many Places have you industriously avoided it? In all the Forms of Prayer you have drawn up, where is this Benefit once taken notice of? or where have you once mentioned the *Merits*, *Mediation*, or *Intercession* of Christ, or ask'd any one Thing for his Sake? You have attempted to confute the late Dr. Clarke more than once in this Work; give me leave to add his Sentiments on the present Subject, that if you think fit you may have the Pleasure also to confute him in the next.

" The Sacrifice of the Death of Christ (which is
 " the Foundation of God's accepting Repentance
 " consistently with the Honour of his divine Laws)
 " was inestimably the greatest Blessing that ever
 " was conferred on the Sons of Men; yea, the
 " Fountain and Spring, the original Foundation of
 " all other Blessings.*" Again, " Which (re-
 " ferring to several foregoing Scripture Ex-
 " pressions, which) do all plainly signify that
 " Christ by his Death, and the shedding of his
 " most precious Blood, has made full and suffi-
 " cient Satisfaction to the Justice of God for the Sins
 " of the whole World, that is, for as many as
 " shall out of the World flee unto him, and
 " submit

* Serm. Vol. IV: p. 122.

" submit themselves to the Terms of the New
 " Covenant, whereof he is Mediator.†" A-
 gain, " The Son of God, in order to the effectual
 " Expiation of Sin, suffered in the Sinner's stead,
 " and by bearing the Wrath of God for us, made a
 " perfect Atonement for the Sins of all true Peni-
 " tents." || Once more, " To say that Christ
 " died for our Advantage, but not in our stead;
 " that his Death was not properly a Sacrifice for
 " Sin, but merely a *Testimony to his Doctrine*,
 " and an *Example* to encourage us to suffer Per-
 " secution chearfully for the Will of God, is
 " really to diminish from the Grace and Mercy
 " of God, and from that exceeding Love of
 " our Saviour to Mankind, which the Apostle
 " extolls principally from this very Considera-
 " tion, that he laid down his Life for us, or in
 " our Stead." *

Thus have I laid before you those Things
 which give me but too much ground to conclude
 that you have departed from the common Faith,
 in several *essential* Articles of our holy Religion.
 And had it been a personal Matter only, I shou'd
 have left it wholly to God and your own Con-
 science, without giving myself or you this
 Trouble. Nay, had you, like a fair Adversary,
 produced your Arguments, and openly attack'd
 these Articles of Christianity, I am perswaded I
 should have left the Defence of them to some ab-
 bler Hand. But when upon a diligent View and
 Review of your Work, it appeared plainly to
 me that you artfully insinuated your *peculiar* Te-
 nents, and that *these* being convey'd in a Book
 wrote on so practical a Subject, as that of the
 holy Supper, might spread the wider and do
 the

↑ Serm. Vol. V. p. 174. || Vol. VIII. p. 345.

• Serm. Vol. VIII. p. 368.

the greater Mischief; I thought it my indispensable Duty to lose no time in laying them open to the World, and giving your Readers fair Warning in what Manner they peruse your Instructions.

Another Peculiarity of yours is, that Excommunication is a Thing utterly impracticable in the present Age; for so much you seem plainly to hint in those Words, p. 89. " And in Times and Places where this can be certainly judg'd of, and the Rule put in Practice without Prejudice to any Persons who ought not to suffer by it, it may be a very good Rule still." A most unhappy People we Christians of this Age, forsaken of Christ and the holy Spirit, at least to a great Degree! Forsaken also of all common Understanding, that we are not able to determine who are *scandalously and notoriously immoral in the habitual and open Conduct of their Lives!* For of such Persons it is you interpret this Rule yourself, those are your own Words. And should we be able to make a certain Judgment who are *scandalously and notoriously immoral*, yet it seems we cannot exclude them the Communion, *without Prejudice to other Persons, who ought not to suffer by it.* And will it not be the Case as long as the World stands, that one must suffer by another Man's Sin, both from the natural Consequence and penal Effect of it? Who can help it? Must therefore the Laws of God or the King be suspended in their Execution? No sure. You tell us, p. 95. " That the Apostle Paul commands the *Corinthians* to put away from amongst them a very wicked Man, whom he compares to *Leaven*, because he might corrupt others of the Society; and then immediately expresses his desire, that they should be an entire,

" un-

"uncorrupted, new Lump or Mass." Is there any Thing in this Reason, Sir, peculiar to the Apostolick Times? Is it not as desirable that the Church be at this time free from *Leaven*, entire, uncorrupted Lump or Mass, as it was then? And may not Excommunication be practised now, without *Prejudice to any Persons that ought not to suffer by it*, as well and easily as then? When you shall be pleased to favour us with your Reasons to the contrary, we shall better understand you. In the mean time bear with me; if I add here the Opinion of the late Dr. Clarke.¹⁸ "Christian Discipline ought to separate Persons of a vicious and debauched Life from the Communion of Saints, as their own Conscience separates them from the Hope of Heaven." * And the Judgment of the present Lord Bishop of Winchester, "I fear he will find it hard to prove it to be consistent with the Duty of a good Clergyman (*i. e.* not to exclude a Person from the Communion unless his Sin be an Offence to the Congregation;) for supposing him to know certainly that a Person is an Unbeliever, or habitually engaged in a Course of Sin, utterly forbid and condemned in the Gospel; will this justify him in owning this Person as a Christian fit for the Communion, merely because the Congregation happens to know nothing of this? Let the Dean try to reconcile this with Truth and Christianity, remembering that every Clergyman has a private Conscience to be satisfied with his own private Conduct. *The common Rights of Subjects defended, and the Nature of the Sacramental Test considered*, p. 295.

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What you have dropp'd concerning the Consecration of the Elements, has given no little Offence. Some Persons hence judge that you are gone over to the Scheme of the Author who wrote *the Rights of the Christian Church.* And indeed it unluckily falls out that you have hit upon the same Sentiments, but I hope not with the same View. His words are, * " Does not every one, as well as the Minister, equally apply the Bread and the Wine to the same holy and spiritual Use, in commemorating the Benefits received by our Saviour, and in offering up the same Prayers, and desiring the same Blessings? And whoever does this with a due Application of Mind, rightly consecrates the Elements for himself, since this is the only Consecration they are capable of." Your words are, † " The Prayer of Consecration is so fram'd, that the whole Congregation is supposed to join in the one only Petition in it." And again, " This is a personal Appropriation of the Bread and Wine to the serious and religious Remembrance of Christ. — It is, if I may use the Word, a sort of Consecration of them, which is the Duty of every Communicant himself; and without which all other Consecrations that have gone before will do him no service at all. It is he alone, who must by his own inward thought and application of his Mind to the Remembrance of Christ, make this Bread and this Wine different to himself from Bread and Wine taken at a common Meal." Herein I have been your Advocate, and said that it's very possible these Expressions might be made use of by you, though you do

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* *Rights of the Christian Church*, p. 108.

† P. 121.

not entertain that Opinion, to support and defend which the like Expressions are used in the Rights of the Christian Church. They convince me you were apprehensive some Persons may have superstitiously placed too great a Confidence in the Minister's Part of the Performance, as possibly some may have done; but I cannot bring myself to think, without further Grounds than this, that either you esteem not the Office of the Ministry to be of divine Institution, or that you do not believe that the Blessing of God is ordinarily to be expected in the way of his own appointing. However, upon this Occasion I cannot but observe two things. The one is, that Dr. Stillingfleet in his *Irenicum*, (a Book of the greatest Latitude that he ever wrote) urges the Perpetuity of the Institution of the Lord's Supper, as a Medium to prove the Perpetuity of a Christian Ministry; on this Foundation, that it could be administered by no other hand. His Words are very remarkable, * "The Lord's Supper is appointed to set forth the Lord's Death till he come, whereby the Continuance of it in the Church of God is necessarily implied. Now then if these things, which are the proper Objects of the ministerial Function, be of a perpetual Nature, it necessarily follows, that that Function to which it belongs to administer these things, must be of a perpetual Nature." The other thing I would observe is, That the first Writer (as far as I know) who maintain'd the contrary Doctrine in our Time, was Dr. Tyndal, in his famous Book of the Rights of the Christian Church.

You cannot, I think, blame me for having thus addressed myself to you, and laying before

before the World what I apprehend to be the Tendency of your Book; and you can the less do it, because of the Authority of that great Name to whom it is attributed by the Publick, which, if it indeed have the Tendency I fear, must not a little promote and forward it. I hope I have let nothing fall unbecoming the Character of a Clergyman, or which may any ways be construed as wanting of a due Respect to you. I am sure no such thing was by me designed. If what I have written gives you an Opportunity of explaining your Sentiments, and shewing the World that my Apprehensions are vain, it may be no Cause of Uneasiness to you, and it will be a singular Pleasure to

Your Sincere Friend, and

Humble Servant.

London, July. 2 1735.



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